

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 142388
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO CINCEUR FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 142388

EXDIS - MILITARY HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOL RPT BEIRUT 2913 ACTION SECSTATE INFO TEL AVIV AMMAN CAIRO
DAMASCUS R 180939Z JUN 77 QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2913

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS IS LE

SUBJ: SOUTH LEBANON

REF: TEL AVIV 4407

1. AMBASSADOR LEWIS' AMAZEMENT IS UNDERSTANDABLE, BUT RECORD
OF DISSIMULATION BY ALL PARTIES IN AREA IS SUCH THAT EVERYONE
AUTOMATICALLY BELIEVES THE WORST ABOUT THE OTHERS.

2. LOCAL AGITATION ABOUT SOUTH COULD CONCEIVABLY BE RESULT
OF PLO DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN, BUT MASS HYSTERIA SEEMS MORE
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LIKELY EXPLANATION. ARGUMENT AGAINST BEGIN'S DOING ANYTHING
ADVENTURESOME GIVEN IN LAST PARA REFTEL SOUNDS VERY
REASONABLE TO US, AND IS WHAT I HAVE BEEN TELLING
LEBANESE, BUT THEY ARE TOO MUCH PREY TO RUMOR AND
ANXIETY TO PUT MUCH FAITH IN IT. THEY STILL THINK
ISRAELIS CONSIDER SOUTH LEBANON TERRA IRREDENTA
BECAUSE ISRAELIS HAVE EXPLICITLY COVETED LITANI IN

PAST. TO THEM, FACT THAT AREA NOT CONTROLLED BY
LEBANESE, PLUS FACT PALESTINIAN ACTIVITIES GIVE
PLAUSIBLE EXCUSE FOR INTERVENTION, PLUS EXISTENCE
POTENTIAL ALLIES AMONG CHRISTIANS, MAKE THIS OPPORTUNE
TIME FOR ISRAELIS TO MAKE A GRAB, PARTICULARLY IF ONE
ACCEPTS THEIR THESIS THAT BEGIN WOULD REALLY LIKE TO
DERAIL OUR SETTLEMENT EFFORTS. THIS HAIR-RAISING
SCENARIO BECOMES ALL THE MORE PLAUSIBLE LOCALLY
BECAUSE OF EXPLICIT MARONITE INTEREST IN SEPARATE
STATE AND RECORD OF MILITARY COOPERATION WITHHPSRAEL.

3. WE VERY GRATIFIED, HOWEVER, TO LEARN OF REASSURING
COMMENTS FROM SHLOMO GAZIT AND EZER WEIZMAN (ALTHOUGH
LATTER'S REMARKS ABOUT CHRISTIAN ENCLAVES REITERATES
RATIONALE FOR UNILATERAL INTERVENTION ON LEBANESE
TERRITORY, JUSTIFICATION FOR WHICH WILL BE UP TO
ISRAELIS). I HAVE BEEN TELLING ALL AND SUNDRY HERE
THAT ISRAELIS NOT UP TO ANYTHING, BUT IT IS GOOD TO
HAVE SOME EXPLICIT SUPPORT FOR THAT THESIS FROM AUTHORITATIVE
SOURCES IN ISRAEL.
PARKER

UNQUOTE VANCE

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NNN

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